

7: Rocketry and Exploring the Solar System

Learning Objectives

- Describe the principles of rocketry and the history of rockets.
- Explore the concept of transfer orbits and gravity assist maneuvers.
- Describe newer propulsion systems.
- Review the history of space exploration, including missions to the Moon, the terrestrial planets, and the out solar system.

3 . . . 2 . . . 1 . . . Blast off!

There is something about a rocket launch that excites the imagination. The idea of leaving the bounds of Earth to travel to other worlds fascinates us. While people have used rockets in warfare for thousands of years, we have only been using them to send people and payloads into space since the mid-twentieth century. Today, they remain the way we send probes to explore other planets and get people and supplies to the International Space Station (ISS).

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